

# Biennial Report

1951--1953



Advertising  
Department  
STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION  
OF MONTANA

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STATE OF MONTANA  
**HIGHWAY COMMISSION**  
HELENA

January 7, 1953

To the Honorable J. Hugo Aronson, Governor of Montana,  
Members of the 33rd Legislative Assembly and the  
People of Montana

The Advertising Office of the State Highway Commission of Montana presents herewith its Biennial Report in accordance with provisions of H. B. 197.

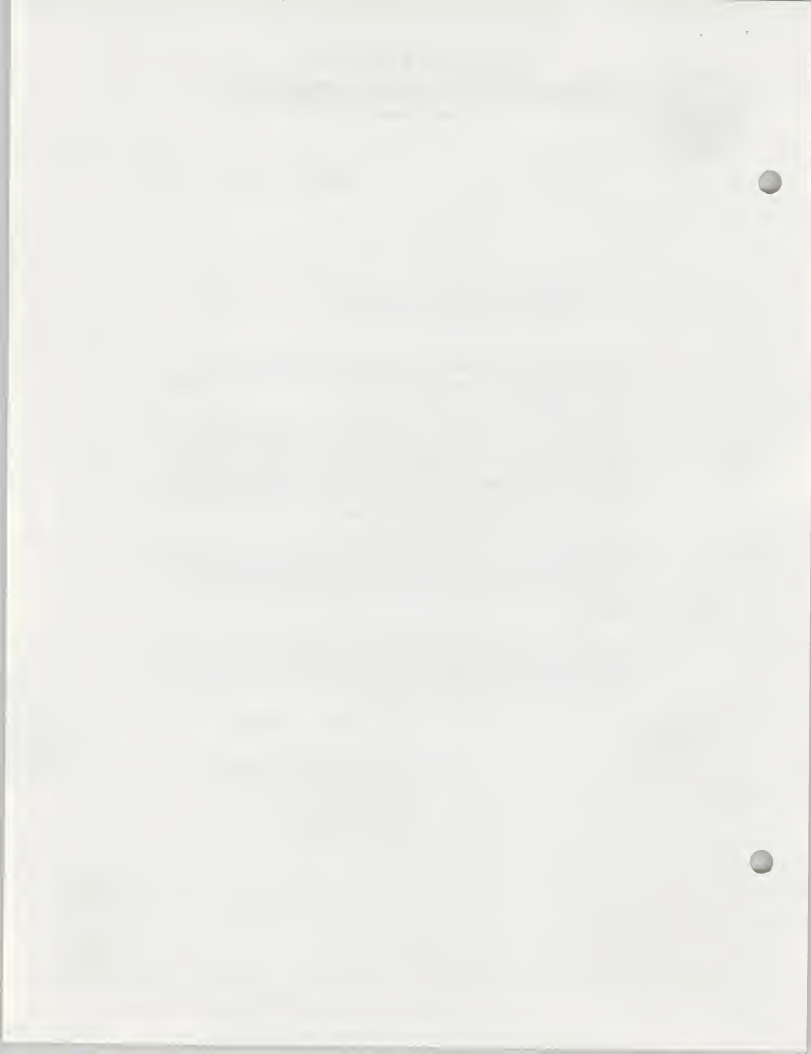
In the present biennium, activities of the Advertising Office have been limited in comparison with the preceding two bienniums due to its reduced appropriation. Through diligent effort and alertness, the office has succeeded in drawing attention to Montana's magnificent vacation attractions whenever the opportunity presented itself.

Travel has become an accepted part of American living. In 1952 over 44,000,000 Americans had paid vacations. Montana's share, you will note from this report, was over 80 million dollars, sufficient to keep it the state's third largest industry.

The Commission wishes to express its appreciation to the Advertising Office, governmental state agencies, chambers of commerce and other private and civic organizations for their fine cooperation the past two years.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Soderberg, Chairman  
Nels Bach  
Walter Bolkovatz  
T. W. Elliott  
John R. Graham



Biennial Report  
ADVERTISING OFFICE, STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION OF MONTANA

Montana's 32nd Legislative Assembly set aside \$30,000.00 for the 1951-53 biennium "for use in publicizing the resources and travel attractions of the state."

This was the third consecutive appropriation made by Montana legislatures for the purpose of advertising Treasure State vacation attractions. In 1947, the initial state advertising appropriation of \$200,000.00 for the biennium was made, and in 1949 it was followed with another \$200,000.00 appropriation.

Montana's Tourist Income Climbs . .

Tourist income for Montana hit an all-time high in 1952 with \$80,183,263, the seventh year in a row that it has shown an increase.

Because of the limited appropriation no national advertising was contracted in 1952. Efforts were directed into less expensive channels, such as publicity, national travel shows and travel editor tours.

On the surface, it appears that Montana's tourist industry did right well in 1952 without any national advertising. Many will ask--how come? The matter of selling a state and its vacation advantages is a long range proposition. California and Arizona did not create the urge for a "sun" vacation overnight. Florida sold itself as a winter vacation state; then turned around and promoted summer vacations. It did such a good job that now Florida's summer tourist business exceeds its winter vacation business prior to the war. That's selling and it takes time.

Why the Increase Without National Advertising? . .

It wasn't really an increase without advertising. Montana's tourist business held up well for several reasons.

1. The 1948 thru 1951 national advertising program
2. National publicity breaks in 1950
3. Television Movies
4. Increased Popularity of Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks

(1) After Montana entered the national advertising picture in 1948, it carried on the longest sustained advertising program (four years) in its history. There is no question that it created an urge for many to see the Land of Shining Mountains. This can be seen readily from the number of inquiries initiated by national advertising. (See page 5)

(2) In 1950 Montana received some national publicity which money couldn't possibly buy: i. e., a 44-page article, with 24 pages in full color, in the June 1950 National Geographic magazine--1,700,000 circulation, and 18 pages with seven in full color in the September, 1950 issue of Holiday magazine--850,000 circulation. Since then, through the efforts of



the Advertising Office and the Montana Chamber of Commerce, Montana has received many writeups in metropolitan dailies and magazines throughout the country.

(3) Montana now has three 14½ minute sound films, available in either color or black and white. Millions have viewed these Montana films on television (see report on page 5) and Montana's beautiful scenery cannot but help create a desire to see the wonders of our state.

(4) The two great national parks, Glacier and Yellowstone, have always been outstanding drawing cards for Montana. As their popularity climbs, so will traffic in and out of Montana to these playgrounds increase. In 1952 these two national parks had a combined attendance of nearly two million people.

It is for these reasons that Montana's tourist business went on to new highs. How long it will last without national advertising is anybody's guess. That other states and other regions are vying for the tourist who comes to Montana is easily seen by looking at any travel magazine or the travel page of any large daily newspaper. Last year states spent \$4,720,654 of tax money in advertising their tourist attractions, according to a survey conducted by the Curtis Publishing Co.

#### State of Montana Reaps Tourist Revenue . .

How much the State of Montana benefits directly in taxes from tourists is difficult to ascertain, but it is sizeable. Here are some taxes that tourists pay:

Gasoline Taxes--According to the 1952 Montana Travel Survey compiled by the Advertising Office from information gathered through the ports of entry, it was determined that each tourist car traveled 605 miles while in Montana.

On the average each tourist car used 40 gallons of gasoline, paying the 6¢ per gallon tax, or \$2.40 per car. When multiplied by 745,554 out-of-state cars, this totals \$1,789,329 paid into the Montana Highway Fund by tourists in 1952.

If this were used in road building on a 43% state and 57% federal matching basis, it makes possible a \$4,161,230 highway program for Montana.

Non-Resident Fishing and Hunting Licenses--\$235,725 in fishing, ~~fox~~ and big game hunting licenses paid for fiscal year ending April 30, 1952.

State Income Taxes--Difficult to determine. There is no doubt that many new motels and service stations were constructed in Montana as a result of this rising tourist traffic. Many concerns handling tourist services would be on the "rocks" today without the huge influx during the summer season.





## 1952 TRAVEL SUMMARY

During the past five years, the Advertising Office, through the port of entry stations, has distributed 215,000 travel data questionnaire cards. Over 50,000 of these have been returned by visitors. Revisions for the 1952 report are based upon 2,685 completed questionnaires.

### Visitors Entering Montana by Automobile

Number of Car Visitors During	
Summer months . . . . .	273,532
Number of Passengers entering	
during summer . . . . .	902,655
Number of non-resident cars	
during entire year . . . . .	745,554
Number of visitors by car for	
entire year . . . . .	2,460,328
Average number of passengers per car	3.3
Average length of stay . . . . .	4.2 days
Average number of miles driven in	
Montana per car . . . . .	605
Average expenditure per car per stay	\$89.78
Average expenditure per person per stay	\$27.38
Average expenditure per person per day	\$ 6.52
Computed expenditure by 2,460,328 auto-	
mobile visitors . . . . .	\$67,353,939

### Visitors Entering Montana by Plane, Train or Bus

Computed number of visitors arriving by	
transportation other than auto* . . . .	468,634
Computed expenditures by plane, train	
and bus passengers . . . . .	<u>\$12,829,324</u>
TOTAL TOURIST EXPENDITURES IN MONTANA DURING 1952	\$80,183,263

\*(American Automobile Assn. estimates 84% of tourists travel by car, 16% by other conveyances)



ADVERTISING OFFICE EXPENDITURES -- BIENNium July 1, 1951 to June 30, 1953

	1951-52 Expenditures	1952-53 Budget
<u>PRINTING</u>		
Folders, envelopes, letterheads, engravings	\$4,189.13	\$2,113.48
<u>PROMOTION</u>		
Photos, Art work, Publicity	412.47	200.00
Television Movies	--	225.00
National Exhibiting and Travel Editors Tour	1,000.00	1,000.00
<u>SALARIES</u>		
Director	\$5,316.70	
Clerk	2,288.24	
Extra Help	<u>180.02</u>	
	7,784.96	8,000.00
<u>MISCELLANEOUS</u>		
Office Supplies	210.87	275.00
Freight and Express	271.02	300.00
Telephone and Telegraph	123.33	150.00
Transportation & Subsistence	365.56	400.00
Assn. Dues, Publications	63.50	65.00
Postage	--*	900.00
Auto Expense	640.54	600.00
Industrial Accident Board	22.73	25.00
Public Employees Retirement	215.50	225.00
Conference Expense	20.85	25.00
Miscellaneous	<u>29.06</u>	<u>50.00</u>
TOTAL	\$15,349.52	\$14,653.48

\*No postage outlay necessary because of \$1,000 deposit remaining  
in postoffice fund from previous fiscal year

1951-52 Yearly Appropriation -- (Gen. Fund Acct. 507)	\$15,000.00
Credit for sale of postcards to commercial firm --	<u>3.00</u>
	\$15,003.00

1951-52 Expenditures - - -	\$15,349.52
1951-52 Allocation - - -	<u>15,003.00</u>
Overrun	346.52

1952-53 Allocation - - - -	\$15,000.00
Minus Overrun - - - - -	<u>346.52</u>

Available for 1952-53 fiscal year - - - - - \$14,653.48



## Advertising Office Activities . .

NATIONAL ADVERTISING--Not one line of national advertising describing Montana's scenic beauties was run during the present biennium because of limited funds. When a 1/4 page advertisement in black and white costs \$1,335.00 in Holiday Magazine for one issue, plus costs of plates, etc., it is impossible to contract any kind of an advertising schedule with a \$15,000.00 annual appropriation.

INQUIRIES--Without an advertising program in national periodicals and metropolitan daily newspapers, the number of inquiries about Montana as a vacation state dropped drastically. Here is a tabulation of inquiries for the last three years:

1950 (with advertising) . . . . .	62,955 inquiries
1951 (with advertising) . . . . .	58,957 inquiries
1952 (without advertising) . . . . .	18,299 inquiries

In 1952 there were 40,678 less inquiries received at the Advertising Office than in 1951. Surveys conducted by Oregon and Missouri show that 40% of all inquiring parties, when supplied with information and material, come as tourists sooner or later. Using this yardstick, we find that 16,271 parties more might have come to Montana in 1952 had the state been advertising and supplied them with proper literature.

The Travel Summary (page 3) shows that each tourist party spent \$89.78 while in Montana. If 16,271 additional tourist parties had come and spent that amount, Montanans would have received \$1,460,810. 1952 was a wonderful tourist year, but it could have been a million and a half dollars better with an advertising program.

PRINTED MATERIAL--One new mailing piece, "Montana Offers Variety Vacations" was printed in 50,000 quantity during the present biennium. A four color rack folder, "Montana Invites You" is being reprinted in 25,000 quantity.

The Advertising Office was fortunate in entering the present biennium with several thousand copies of a large booklet "See Everything in Montana" printed in 1948-49, and over a hundred thousand large mailing envelopes.

It is anticipated that the supply of the first two mentioned folders will be exhausted some time this coming spring.

TELEVISION MOVIES--Montana has three films in circulation, "Dude Ranching in Montana," "Montana Ghost Town" and "Montana's Flowing Treasure." During 1952 there were 302 showings of these films outside of Montana.

The 100th showing of a Montana film on television occurred during 1952. The first film release, "Dude Ranching in Montana" has been televised by 48 stations. There is no time charge on these films because they are both entertaining and educational.

In addition to the TV showings, these films were used by Farmers Union groups throughout Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin, by motor clubs, sportsmen's groups, P. T. A.'s, women's clubs and at travel shows.



PUBLICITY--News releases and glossy photos (8x10's) were fed to daily newspapers and house organs. Lack of a good file of black and white photos cut down use of Montana photos on daily newspaper travel pages.

TRAVEL SHOWS--Montana, as a member of the Pacific Northwest Travel Association, participated in seven travel shows in 1952 at San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis, Des Moines and St. Louis. Over 150,000 pieces of Montana literature, provided by the Advertising Office and local chambers of commerce, were distributed at these shows.

For 1953, Montana will exhibit through the Pacific Northwest Association, at San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Minneapolis and Cleveland.

TRAVEL TOURS--Four travel editors from the Fort Worth, Texas Press, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, the Los Angeles Examiner and Westways magazine toured Montana in 1952 under auspices of the Pacific Northwest Travel Assn. Another tour for a similar number of top notch editors is planned for 1953.

SPECIAL PROJECTS--Assistance was rendered by the Advertising Office in the matter of historical highway markers and operation of the nine port of entry stations during the tourist season.

In May, 1952 a Montana week was staged at the Emporium store, in San Francisco, largest department store on the West coast. There was a Montana window and a program honoring the Treasure State.

For the third consecutive year, the Advertising Office in cooperation with the Montana Automobile Assn. and the Montana Chamber of Commerce, sponsored a Travel Counselors school in Helena. Between 30 and 40 people who serve in chambers of commerce and motor club offices as advisors to tourists attended the school.

During the summer a series of five-minute "quickie" radio broadcasts were beamed at tourists in Montana suggesting that they visit the main attractions and stay a day longer. This was in cooperation with the Montana Fish & Game Commission over a state-wide network.

#### An Increased Appropriation Needed . .

Montana and Delaware rest in the cellar when it comes to state tourist advertising, both appropriating \$15,000 annually. Practically every state in the West, with the exception of Idaho, is spending more money on tourist advertising than Montana, such as New Mexico--\$375,000, Colorado--\$150,000 and Oregon--\$250,000.

It is not inferred that because these states are spending huge sums, Montana should fall in line and spend like amounts. Many of these states do not have outstanding tourist attractions such as the Treasure State. Yet, they have built their tourist business far above ours, thus setting goals which Montana could reach.

The Advertising Office is a name only without national advertising. Its main function at the present time is answering letters about Montana's





vacation spots, road conditions, etc. Even these cannot be answered properly without the right kind of literature, and \$15,000 does not permit the printing of a variety of folders or the large quantities needed for national distribution.

#### Recommendations . .

An appropriation of \$200,000 for the next biennium should be made if Montana is to engage in a national advertising program.

An appropriation of \$200,000 would enable Montana to launch a national advertising program in magazines of general circulation, travel magazines, education journals, fishing and hunting magazines and the principal daily newspapers of the country . . . would provide funds for printing of a 24 to 32 page booklet outlining the advantages of a Montana vacation and other folders on campgrounds, dude ranching, fishing and hunting, Glacier Park, etc. . . would permit producing one or two movies yearly about Montana for television use . . . and would enable greater participation in travel shows, travel tours, publicity and promotion.

More roadside campgrounds and picnic spots should be constructed alongside the main Montana highways for tourist use. Lack of good camping facilities is one of the most common criticisms leveled at the state by visitors.

Montana's state park sites should be developed. A good state park system would aid materially in keeping the visitor longer in Montana.

It will be noted from the Travel Summary that the length of stay in the state of our visitors dropped a whole day from 5.2 days to 4.2 days. This is a serious situation, inasmuch had the tourists stayed the same number of days as in 1951, Montana's tourist income would have been \$19,000,000 greater in 1952!

Only one conclusion can be drawn from this fact that the length of stay is dropping: We are not selling Americans on our points of interest such as Lewis and Clark Cavern State Park, Flathead Lake, Fort Peck dam and lake, Gates of the Mountains, Virginia City and a host of other attractions. We have a big job ahead in letting them know what there is to see and do in the Land of Shining Mountains.

Prepared by  
Albert Erickson  
Advertising Director

